

ACCOUNTING POLICY

TOPIC: Section 12--Travel 1.6	EFFECTIVE DATE: 6/14/83
TITLE: Headquarters City Meals and Meeting Locations--Delegation of Authority	REVISION DATE: 4/17/98
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BACKGROUND

Division Administrators have been delegated the authority to approve certain state employee (and non-state employee) meal expense and have been authorized to approve meeting locations under certain circumstances. This authority cannot be delegated further. See **BUSINESS STANDARDS 5.0 (Delegation of Authority)**.

POLICIES

1. **Headquarters City Meals.** Headquarters city meal expenses can be approved when it is necessary to conduct state business during the meal period. In most cases approval is not possible when it is a DHFS (or other state agency) meeting and is attended primarily by state employees. Reasons such as keeping the group together, allowing a shortened meal period, and administrative ease do not justify payment of headquarter city meal expenses.

Headquarter city expenses can be allowed if official state business is being conducted during the meal period or if DHFS does not control the times of the sessions, and meals are planned within the event.

- a. **Vendor Billing.** When the employee is authorized for a headquarters city meal, in writing by the Division Administrator, arrangements may be made with the vendor to bill the employing unit for the cost of the meal.

A list of names of employees who attended, their headquarters city and the purpose of the meeting, along with the Administrator's approval for headquarters meals, if any, must be attached to the invoice submitted for payment [see *DHFS Supervisor's Manual* Section 228.1 C3b (1)].

- b. **Blanket Authorization.** When the Secretary of the Department has granted blanket authorization for meals in the headquarters city (e.g., for employees representing the Department in collective bargaining) reimbursement is claimed on a travel voucher by the eligible employees.

The following procedures relate to approving reimbursement for meals in the headquarters city:

1. Reimbursement for meal expenses in the headquarters city will be authorized only when absolutely necessary pursuant to above guidelines.
 2. If authorization is granted on an individual basis, a copy of the authorization must be attached to the travel voucher which includes a claim for meal expense in the employees headquarters city.
- c. **Meal Exceeding the Maximum.** Except in rare circumstances, meal reimbursements should not exceed state maximums when DHFS is sponsoring the meeting or event. If there are events where the choice of a vendor or location is so limited that we cannot purchase meals within the allowance, a full justification and prior approval by the Division Administrator or delegated designee (See #5 in Travel 1.0) is required.
2. **Meeting Locations.** The Department of Employment Relations Uniform Travel Schedule Amounts (UTSA) provides in part:
- "Meetings, conferences and training sessions sponsored by state agencies primarily for the participation of government employees shall be conducted in public facilities and at locations which will (a) minimize fuel consumption for transportation; (b) provide the necessary services for the session at the most economical cost to the State; (c) facilitate public attendance and/or press coverage as necessary; and (d) accommodate handicapped persons to the fullest extent possible."
- Division administrators may authorize exceptions to that provision in accordance with the following procedures:
- a. Authorization for the use of private facilities may be granted when it is determined that such use will be more efficient, effective or economical than use of available public facilities. Consideration should also be made for providing accessibility for handicapped participants. (See Administrative Directive 23.1).
 - b. The Division Administrator's authorization and justification for use of a private facility will be attached to the voucher for payment of rent or other costs incurred.

REFERENCES

Wisconsin Statutes, Section 20.916 (9)
DHFS Employee Handbook, Page B8
DHFS Supervisor's Manual, Chapter 228
Administrative Directive 23.1
Department of Employee Relations, *Uniform Travel Schedule Amounts* (UTSA)

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